

# Hamilton County Regional Addressing Policy

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# Hamilton County Regional Addressing Policy

## Policy Record

The Regional Addressing Policy was originally adopted by Hamilton County Commission on June 18, 1997. An amendment to the document was approved by the Hamilton County Commission on October 21, 1998. A resolution amending this policy was submitted April 2006.

## Statement of Intent

The Hamilton County Regional Addressing Policy establishes a uniform method of assigning addresses and approving street names throughout Hamilton County. Uniformity is necessary for the preservation of public health, safety, and welfare. Inconsistent and duplicate addresses and street names cause confusion in real property records, delay mail delivery, and raise the threat to citizens in emergency situations. A critical element in this project is the concept of address consistency and specificity. The policies contained in this statement represent the minimum level of intrusion in private life necessary to meet the objectives.

## Definitions

1. **Address Number.** The numerical address, building designation, and unit designation. Building designations are needed when multiple buildings are given the same address. Unit designations are needed by multiple-occupant buildings.
2. **Building Address.** The street address assigned to a primary occupancy structure located on a parcel. A building is defined as any commercial or residential structure with its own street address, or any free-standing structure in an apartment or office complex. A unit defined by firewalls in a multiple-occupancy structure constitutes a building as the term is used here.
3. **Cul-de-sac.** A dead-end street with a semicircular paved area at the end to allow vehicles to turn around without having to back up.

4. **Direction Prefix.** That portion of a street name required to differentiate each portion of the street on either side of a baseline. Address numbers on a street increase with distance from a baseline intersection. Direction prefixes (North, East, South, or West) were previously used to avoid duplication of addresses. Direction prefixes shall not be used by any future streets.
5. **Loop Street.** A minor road that intersects another, usually a higher volume street, at more than one point; also known as a circle roadway.
6. **Parcel Address.** The street address assigned to a parcel; recorded in the real property records of the Hamilton County Assessor of Property. The parcel address is assigned by the responsible governing agency and added to the real property database by the Assessor of Property. The parcel address may be derived from a subdivision lot address or by application of these policies.
7. **Root Name.** The primary street name element.
8. **Street Address.** The combination of address number and street name.
9. **Street Name.** The combination of direction prefix, root name, and street type suffix.
10. **Street Type Suffix.** The kind of street; e.g., Drive, Street, Lane. Used to differentiate various existing streets with the same root name. Some designated street type suffixes are used to identify cul-de-sacs and loop streets. Street type suffix may reflect the general importance of a given street in the roadway network.
11. **Subdivision Lot Address.** The street address assigned to a subdivision lot; usually recorded on the subdivision plat. The subdivision lot address (or, simply 'lot address') should become the parcel address unless the parcel boundary is different. The subdivision lot address is determined in accordance with these policies by the governmental agency responsible for subdivision plat approval.

## **Statements of Policy**

### **1. General Policies**

- 1.1. Each responsible governing agency shall retain full control over the

review and approval of official street names and the assignment of addresses to subdivision lots, real property parcels, and buildings.

- 1.2. Each responsible governing agency may administratively assign the duties of street name review and approval and/or address assignment to another governing agency.
- 1.3. The addresses of subdivision lots shall be determined in accordance with these policies prior to recording the subdivision plat. The address of each lot shall be indicated on the final plat.
- 1.4. Addresses of real property parcels shall be determined in accordance with these policies and recorded in the database maintained by the Hamilton County Assessor of Property.
- 1.5. The owner of multiple occupancy buildings shall retain full control over the assignment of unit designations within the buildings. The appropriate governing agency must be notified of unit designations in the manner prescribed below prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy or within 15 days of occupancy, whichever comes first.
- 1.6. Addresses of buildings and the units within them shall be determined in accordance with these policies and recorded in the database maintained by the Hamilton County Assessor of Property and as part of the official record of any building permits issued by the appropriate governing body.
- 1.7. Hamilton County Geographic Information System (GIS) maintains a database reflecting the Hamilton County Assessor's data and any additional address assignments that may be provided to a single property parcel.
- 1.8. Requests for changes to address assignments and street names may be submitted by local government agencies, affected owners,

utility companies, 911, and the United States Postal Service.

- 1.9. All private streets shall be assigned street names and address numbers in accordance with this policy.
- 1.10. The assignment of addresses to a private street does not imply or guarantee legal access easement to the private street.
- 1.11. The governing agencies responsible for addressing and street names will notify and share data with public agencies affected by additions, changes, and corrections to existing address assignments and street names.

## **2. Addressing Grid**

- 2.1. Street address numbers are governed by a master grid covering the entire county. This grid consists of designated baseline streets and boundaries. For the purpose of ascertaining a street number, the frontage of all streets within Hamilton County shall be measured by a uniform method from common baselines.
- 2.2. The current established baselines are:
  - 2.2.1. Eastern brow (top cliff line) of Lookout Mountain; generally coincides with the city limits of the City of Lookout Mountain, Tennessee.
  - 2.2.2. Scenic Highway from the Georgia State Line to its intersection at Cummings Highway, then west on Cummings Highway to the western Hamilton County Line.
  - 2.2.3. McCallie Avenue and its continuation as Brainerd Road from Holtzclaw Avenue to its end at Lee Highway, then along East Brainerd Road to the Western & Atlantic Railroad crossing.

- 2.2.4. Dayton Boulevard, and its continuation as Dayton Pike, from Stringer's Ridge Tunnel to the northern county line.
- 2.2.5. North Market Street from the Tennessee River bridge to the northern end of North Market Street and its projection to Matlock Street.
- 2.2.6. Central Avenue and its projection from the Georgia-Tennessee state line north to the CSX Railway crossing, then west along the railroad to Alton Park Boulevard (near 33<sup>rd</sup> Street), then north along Alton Park Boulevard to Market Street, then north along Market Street to the Tennessee River bridge.
- 2.2.7. Tennessee River east and west of Market Street Bridge.
- 2.2.8. Beginning at the intersection of Champion Road and Highway 58, then following Highway 58 to the county line.
- 2.3. The primary objective of block numbering is to create a consistent address number range on both sides of intersecting streets. The baseline grid provides a guide for street block address ranges.
- 2.4. All streets not terminating upon the baseline specified in the preceding section shall be numbered in the same manner as contiguous streets, beginning at the northern termination of the street, if running north and south, and at the eastern termination if running east and west and lying west of Market or Cowart Streets and at the western termination if lying east of such streets. (Chattanooga City Code 1986, § 32-169)
- 2.5. Address numbers on baseline streets generally increase with distance away from the Tennessee River crossing of Market Street; also known as the Point of Origin.
- 2.6. The first block adjacent to a baseline will start with the address

number of 01. Successive blocks, as defined by cumulative distances or intersecting streets, shall increase by 100; i.e., block sequence is 00, 100, 200, 300, and so forth.

2.7. New street names shall be unique without reliance on direction prefixes. In effect, new streets which cross baselines must have different street names on each side of the baseline.

2.8. New subdivisions that include new streets shall have their internal address numbers determined in a manner so as to fit into the existing address numbers where new streets intersect older streets.

### **3. Address Assignment**

3.1. Address numbers shall be whole numbers.

3.2. Address numbers are assigned using a pattern of odd and even numbers).

Odd numbers (01, 03, 05 ...) are assigned to the west and north sides of streets.

Even numbers (02, 04, 06 ...) are assigned to the east and south sides of streets.

3.3. The direction orientation of new streets shall be determined by the overall arrangement of streets in the vicinity so as to avoid difficulties in maintaining a consistent block address numbering scheme. (Figure 2)

3.4. Address number assignments shall be based on a roadway centerline measuring system using 10-foot intervals as the basic unit of measure.

Each interval has two consecutive numbers, an odd number and an even number (01/02, 03/04, 05/06 ...). The centerline grid begins at the beginning of the block (roadway intersection); with the first address odd/even pair of 01/02 located along the street centerline 10 feet from the point of intersection. (Figure 1)

- 3.5. Blocks of less than 500 feet in length shall be accommodated by a single 100-number address range that begins with  $x01/ x02$  and ends with  $x97/ x98$ , where  $x$  is the block number divided by 100.

For example, the 400 block of a street less than 500 feet in length begins with 401/402 and ends with 497/498. When a block's length exceeds that which can be accommodated within a single 100-number range (i.e., it is longer than 500 feet), the next block shall begin without interruption of the centerline grid; the transition odd/even address number pair is  $x99/x00$ .

- 3.6. Where the Tennessee River is the baseline, address numbers shall begin at the river shoreline for roadways crossing the river. Bridges do not have street address assignments.
- 3.7. Address numbers for subdivision lots shall be determined according to the center of a lot's frontage dimension measured parallel to the street centerline using the 10-foot grid along the street's centerline.
- 3.8. Subdivision lot addresses are expected to become parcel addresses. Where a parcel is created without a corresponding lot, the parcel address shall be determined in the same manner as if it were a subdivision lot.



- 3.9. For purposes of address number determination, the centerline of a cul-de-sac street shall extend to the end of adjacent platted lots (or parcels) as if the street continued.

Lots (or parcels) adjacent to the street centerline extension shall have their address numbers determined by their frontage on the extension. This policy prevents future difficulties with addresses should the cul-de-sac ever be extended. (Figure 4)

- 3.10. Address numbers for structures shall generally be assigned by the appropriate governing agency according to the center of each building's dimension measured parallel to the street centerline using the 10-foot grid along the access street's centerline.

The precise address number assigned should be chosen in consideration of the building's location on the parcel and adjacent addresses. (Figure 6)

The address shall appear on the Certificate of Occupancy and shall be the building address included in official government records.

- 3.11. Lots/parcels located at street intersections shall have an address assigned for each street. Unless precluded by database design limitations, official government records shall list both addresses.

- 3.12. Buildings constructed on lots/parcels at street intersections shall likewise have two alternative street addresses determined by the appropriate governing agency.

The owner of the building shall select one of these two

possible addresses before a Certificate of Occupancy may be issued by the appropriate governing agency.

The address shall appear on the Certificate of Occupancy and shall be the building address included in official government records.

To avoid difficulties with mail delivery, any mailbox erected at the site shall be placed along the street whose address is selected by the building's owner unless otherwise directed by the United States Postal Service.

- 3.13. An owner of a landlocked parcel shall acquire an easement to gain access to a street before a building permit or address assignment may be issued by the appropriate governing agency to authorize the construction of a building on the parcel.
- 3.14. Flag lots and parcels, including landlocked parcels shall have their address determined by the mid-point of the street access width, as measured parallel to the street centerline. Any building erected on a flag lot or landlocked parcel shall be assigned the same address as the lot or parcel. This will result in the parcel and building having the same address.
- 3.15. If a driveway provides access to more than one dwelling, the driveway shall be designated a private street. The appropriate governing agency will not accept this private street as public unless it is constructed to the required specifications.
- 3.16. Existing address numbers that are duplicated or containing letters will be corrected as identified through situations that arise that necessitate the change; e.g., re-subdivision of adjacent property, 911 notification, United States Postal

Service notification, or at a property owners request.

3.17. Temporary address assignments shall be assigned by the responsible governing agency as necessary to support delivery services and 911 coverage for special events that utilize temporary buildings and accommodate large public gatherings.

3.18. Multiple Structures on One Parcel and Multiple-Occupancy Buildings

Multiple-occupancy residential buildings have units called apartments and multiple-occupancy commercial buildings have units called suites.

Each unit in a freestanding single-story, multi-family residence with direct access to a street shall have a separate address.

Building addresses for multiple-occupancy buildings shall be determined by the appropriate governing agency.

A single street address shall be determined for an apartment complex.

The property owner shall designate each structure and unit within each structure with internally unique identifiers. The property owner shall provide a scale drawing of the property showing each structure and a general written description of unit designation method or pattern to the appropriate governing agency.

The address of each unit shall be formed by joining the street address, the building designation, and

the unit designation; for example, "435 Main Street, Apartment 326," for Building 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Unit 6 of the apartment complex located at 435 Main Street.

Addresses for units in a freestanding, multi-story, multi-family residence shall be treated as if an apartment complex; i.e., there shall be one street name and address number for the building with a separate unit number for each dwelling.

A commercial building is defined as a freestanding structure or that portion of a freestanding structure contained within the space determined by the outer walls of the structure and any inner firewalls. (Figure 8)

Each commercial building with separate access to a street shall be given a unique street address.

All the buildings in a commercial development (offices, warehouses, shopping center, etc.) with a shared point of access to a street shall have a single street address.

The property owner shall designate each structure and unit within each structure with internally unique identifiers. The property owner shall provide a scale drawing of the property showing each structure and a general written description of unit designation method or pattern to the appropriate governing agency.

The address of each unit shall be formed by joining the street address, the building designation, and the unit designation; for example, "435 Main Street, Suite 305," suite number means Unit 5 in Building 3.

In multiple-story commercial buildings, suites should be numbered according to the floor they are on by using the floor number as the first part of the suite number; for example, suites on the fourth floor of an office building would be numbered in the range of 400 through 499.

In a commercial structure that includes a combination of single- and multiple-unit buildings (as the term 'building' is defined in this policy), suite numbers and address numbers will be consistently assigned; suite numbers shall be determined as if every suite were a building.

Each property owner or authorized representative of a property owner shall install the address number upon such building prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy by the Building Official.

Whenever an address number becomes incorrect, obliterated or indistinct, the property owner of every such building shall procure and place thereon the correct number, within (30) thirty days after receiving written notice to do so from the appropriate governing agency, Building Official, an authorized Inspector, Police Chief, or Fire Chief.

### 3.19. Communication Tower Address Assignments

The responsible governing agency or their designee will assign and maintain current addresses for communication towers

Letter suffixes shall be utilized only when addressing communication towers.

Communication towers installed on buildings will have the same address as the building with a letter suffix addition.

Freestanding communication towers will have a separate address and a letter suffix addition.

The owner of the tower will be assigned the first letter of the alpha suffix (A) at the letter addition, whether the tower is freestanding or located on top of a building.

Communication companies are required to post their name and contact information in plain view for emergency purposes.

#### **4. Address Signage**

- 4.1 Property owners are responsible for installing the correct address number for their property.
- 4.2 Property owners failing to accurately number a structure in the manner provided by this section within thirty (30) days after receiving legal notice to do so from the appropriate governing agency or their respective designee shall be guilty of a violation of this chapter.
- 4.3 Whenever an address number has been renumbered, become obliterated or indistinct, the property owner shall procure and place thereon the correct number, within thirty (30) days after receiving notice to do so from the appropriate governing agency, Building Official, authorized Inspector, Police Chief or Fire Chief (This only applies to the City of Chattanooga).
- 4.4 Each property owner or authorized representative of a property

owner shall install the address number upon such building prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy by the appropriate governing agency.

- 4.5 The provisions of this subsection shall apply to owners of single-family and two-family residences:

Property owner shall place the address number in a conspicuous position near the front property line of each street address, or

If a parcel is not adjacent to a public right-of-way, in a conspicuous place near the primary means of ingress or egress to such property.

Whenever possible, address numbers shall be placed on the same side of the primary means of ingress and egress as the main structure on the property. Such address numbers shall be posted:

On the structure within five (5) feet of the front door, provided that the front door is clearly visible from the street in front of the building.

On the mailbox of the building, as long as it is on the property standing alone, with numbers at least two and one-half inches in height.

On a metal rod in close proximity to the mailbox or to the primary means of ingress and egress to the property, or

Directly on the street curb in a uniform manner and color approved by the appropriate governing agency.

In no case shall the address numbers be placed more than ten (10) feet from the edge of the street.

If there is more than one driveway entrance and the driveway entrance serve different units, the street address and unit designation shall be placed near each such driveway entrance or on the mailbox near each such driveway entrance.

Whether posted on the mailbox or on a metal rod, all address numbers shall be not less than two and one-half inches in height and shall be made of reflective material.

- 4.6 The provisions of this subsection shall apply to owners of multi-family residences and other than two-family residences:

Any multi-family residential development without a sign or signs designating the name of the development shall have the address numbers placed on all such signs.

Any multi-family residential development without a sign designating the name of the development and any multi-family residential development with such a sign or signs with a setback of more than twenty-five feet from the closest edge of the street shall have the address numbers placed in a conspicuous position near the front property line or,

if the property is not adjacent to a public right-of-way, in a conspicuous place near the entrance to such property. Such addresses shall be posted either:

On each mailbox on the property if the mailbox is directly in front of the unit for which the mailbox is designated or



On a metal rod in close proximity to the mailbox or to the primary means of ingress and egress to the property,

Any awning over the front doorway of a commercial or manufacturing building shall contain address numbering,

or any alternative methods authorized and approved at the sole discretion of the appropriate governing agency.

In no case shall the address numbers be placed more than ten (10) feet from the edge of the street.

Whether posted on the mailbox or on a metal rod, each number shall be not less than two and one-half inches in height and shall be made of reflective material.

In addition to posting the address numbering as set forth in this subsection, the owner of any multi-family residence shall place address numbering upon each individual unit in the development on or near the front door of each unit.

The owner of any multi-family residence in which the primary means of ingress and egress to the units is into an interior hallway shall also place address numbering upon the building itself on or near the entrance from the outside into the building.

All commercial and manufacturing property shall be posted with address numbering at the street near the principal entrances for such structures in a manner approved by the

appropriate governing agency.

- 4.8 Hamilton County Highway Department shall install signs for private streets that are connected to a public street in the unincorporated areas of the Hamilton County. Hamilton County does not install signs for private streets off of a private street.

## **5. Street Names**

- 5.1. Hamilton County Geographic Information System Department maintains a database containing a list of all street names (public, private, and reserved) within Hamilton County. Public access is available to this listing by visiting the GIS office or accessing the GIS website ([gis.hamiltontn.gov](http://gis.hamiltontn.gov)).
- 5.2. Before a new street name may be used, it must be checked, approved, and reserved for use by the Geographic Information System Department to avoid duplication and other conflicts with these rules.
- 5.3. When a street name is requested for approval that is questionable, the requested street name will be evaluated by three staff members to determine its approval.
- 5.4. Names for any existing streets, even if later closed, shall be reserved for a period of five years before they can be considered for reuse.
- 5.5. Unopened right-of-way street names are available immediately for use upon abandonment if the street name has never been used or is not an existing street name.
- 5.6. Any approved new street name designated on a preliminary subdivision plat and is approved for use shall be reserved for up to twenty four months or until a final subdivision plat is

approved, whichever is sooner. The reservation of a street name means that it shall not be utilized to name another street unless the twenty four month time period has expired.

- 5.7. Extensions of existing streets or roads should be given the same name as the street they extend. However, any streets crossing the base line (zero grid line) should be assigned a different name for the portion that extends across the baseline.
- 5.8. No duplicate street names are allowed.
- 5.9. Street names shall be unique in Hamilton County without reference to street type suffixes. For example, Garden Lane, Garden Street, and Garden Circle are no longer allowed.
- 5.10. Street names shall be unique in Hamilton County without reference to directional words such as East, West, North, and South. This practice shall no longer be permitted as a part of any new street name.
- 5.11. The use of more than one street type suffix within a street name is not allowed. For example, Willow Street Place combines two street type suffixes.
- 5.12. Similar street names are allowed, for example: Moon Lake Road, Moon Star Road.
- 5.13. Street names may not be duplicated by combining two words into one word, for example: Maple Crest Drive, Maplecrest Drive.
- 5.14. Street names may not be duplicated by separating one word to make two words, for example: Maplecrest Drive, Maple Crest Drive.

- 5.15. Street names, excluding the suffix, shall be 13 characters or less to fit onto street name signs using letters of standard sizes.
- 5.16. Street names may not be duplicated by spelling out a number, for example: 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Sixth Street.
- 5.17. Street names which sound alike, such as Beach and Peach, shall be avoided.
- 5.18. Street names which are spelled different yet sound the same shall not be allowed; for example, Gayle Way is considered a duplication of Gail Lane, and Amy Drive is considered a duplication of Aimee Lane.
- 5.19. Street names should not reflect the name of a business.
- 5.20. Street type suffixes that shall be used in Hamilton County are limited to the list recognized by Appendix C of the United States Postal Service's *Postal Addressing Standards*, Publication 28, of August 1995, with future versions included.

This list provides a great variety of choices; however, these policies have been formulated so as to avoid the need to be creative with street type suffixes in order to produce unique street names.

Street type suffixes other than: Street, Road, Drive, Avenue, Lane, Court, Place, Way, Circle, or Loop shall have very limited use within Hamilton County.

- 5.21. Each cul-de-sac of less than 500 feet in length shall be given a different name from any opposing street when there are no intervening intersections on the cul-de-sac.

The street type suffix of a cul-de-sac shall be Lane, Court,

Place, or Way.

- 5.22. Two loop or circle streets on either side of a bisecting street shall be given different names to avoid duplication of street addresses. The street type suffix of all loop or circle streets shall be Circle or Loop.
- 5.23. Street type suffixes of Pike, Boulevard, and Highway shall not normally be assigned to new streets. The use of such type suffixes shall be authorized only upon action of the appropriate governing body.
- 5.24. Condominium or apartment complexes ingress and egress may be registered as a private street in accordance with this policy. All addressing assignments will be made to the private street.

## **6. Street Name and Address Number Changes**

- 6.1. Existing street names and addresses should not be changed except to eliminate duplications and spelling inconsistencies by action of the appropriate governing body.
- 6.2. Requests for changes to street names and address numbers may be submitted by local government agencies, affected owners, utility companies, and the United States Postal Service.
- 6.3. Requests for street name and address number changes must be reviewed by the appropriate governing agency within seven calendar days of submission to ensure conformance with these rules.

Once reviewed, a street name change will be handled as a

mandatory referral for approval or rejection by the appropriate legislative body at its next available regularly scheduled meeting.

Street renumbering will be accomplished by staff members of the appropriate governing agency following a proper request and review; legislative body approval is not required.

- 6.4. When a street name change is necessary due to duplication of the street name, the street functional classification will be used to determine which street name will be changed.

Streets given a higher classification will keep the same name.

If both streets are in the same class, the one with the least number of residents to be affected will be assigned a new name.

- 6.5. If the request is rejected, the appropriate agency shall notify the requestor within seven (7) calendar days that the request was denied. If approved, the appropriate governing agency shall notify other affected parties of the change(s). All notifications must include a map to show affected lots with new addresses, and the relative location within Hamilton County.

- 6.6. Affected parties to receive notices include:

Residents and property owners of the affected street.

Utility companies providing service to the affected area: natural gas companies, water or utility districts, electric power provider, and cable television companies.

Affected governmental agencies: Building Inspector, Assessor of Property, Register of Deeds, Engineering Department, Fire

and Police Department, Emergency 911, Regional Planning Agency, GIS Department, and the applicable United States Post Office.

911 Communications Center, which will send the information to telephone companies.

## **7. City of Soddy-Daisy Specific Municipality Requirements**

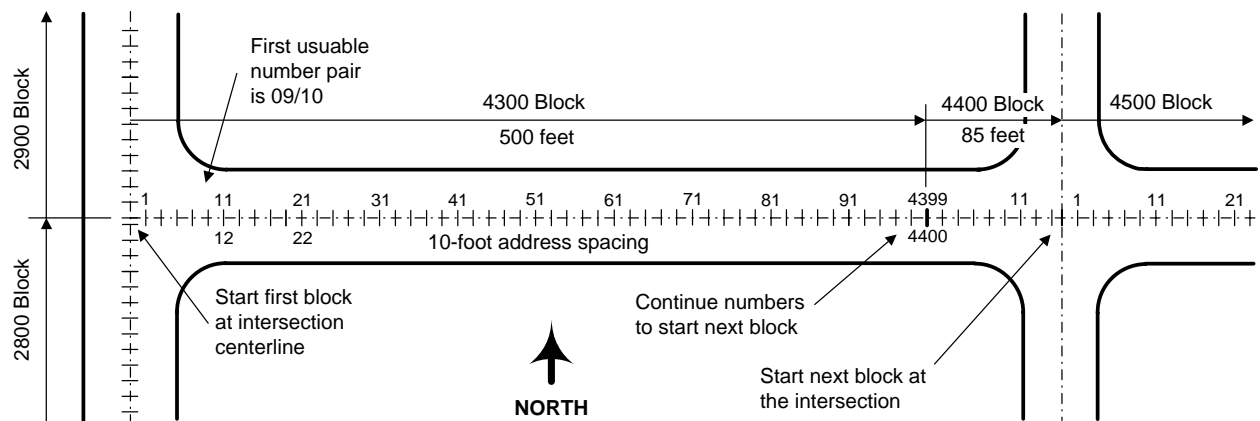
- 7.1. Address assignments will be provided for property located off of dedicated city right-of-way only.
- 7.2. Multiple buildings located on the same property parcel will be addressed as one street number followed by a building identifier or apartment number.

### **Responsible Agencies**

- 1. The legislative bodies of included local governments shall be responsible for all street name designations and changes.
- 2. The City of Soddy-Daisy shall determine, approve, and record addresses within the City of Soddy-Daisy.
- 3. The Hamilton County Geographic Information System (GIS) Department shall determine, approve, and record addresses for the City of Chattanooga, unincorporated portions of Hamilton County and within its municipalities except the City of Soddy Daisy as previously indicated.

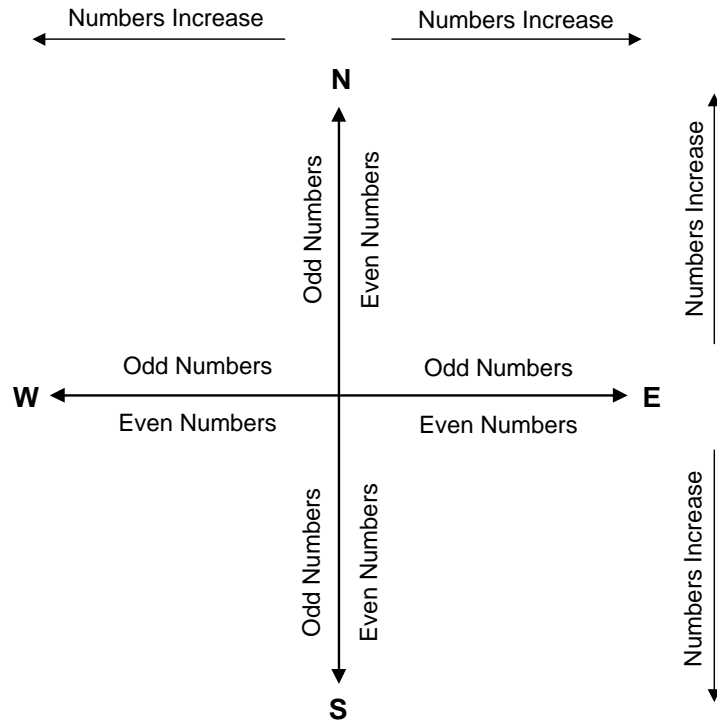
## Supporting Figures

**Figure 1.** *Basic street address numbering method.*

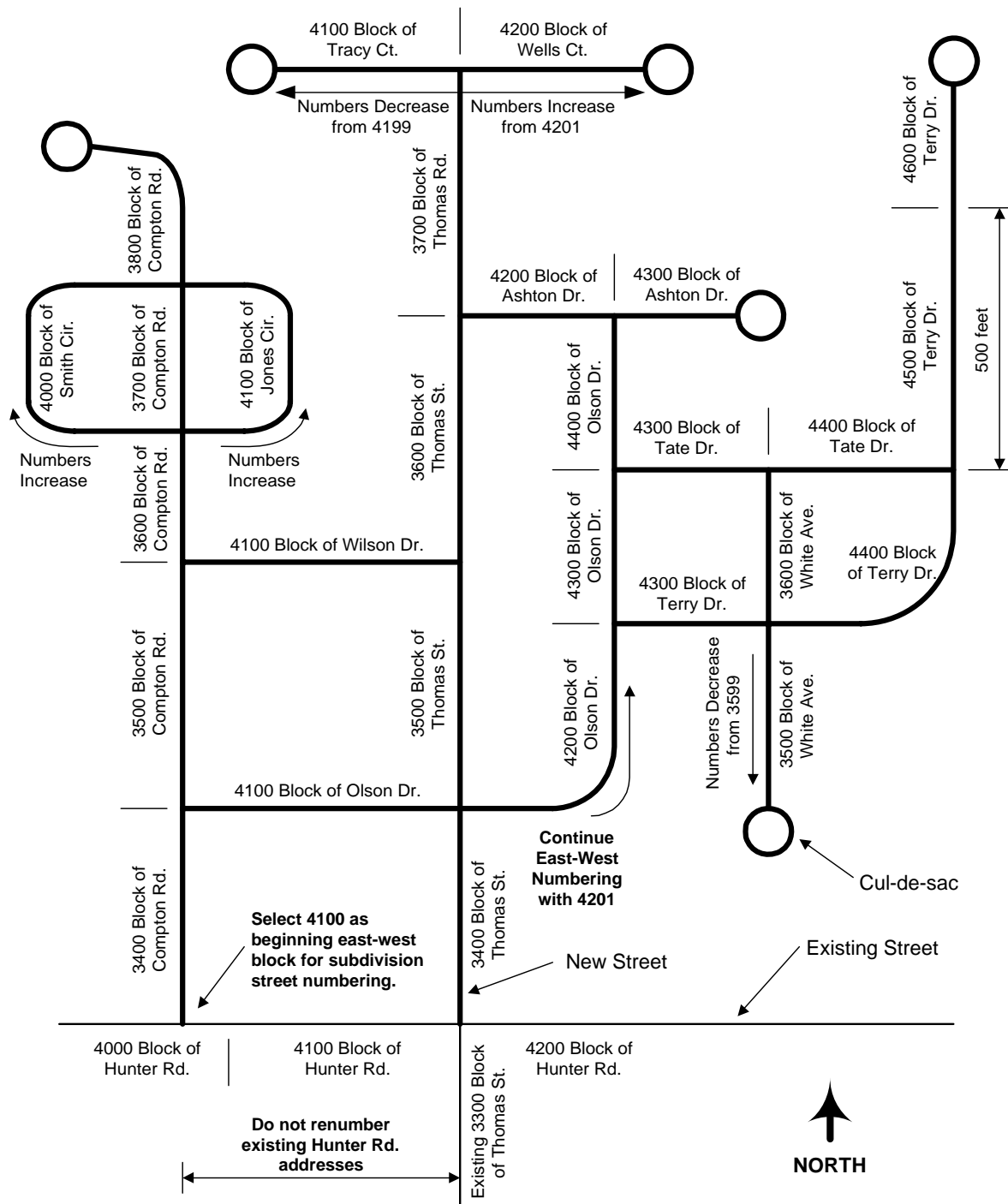


**Figure 2.** *Address numbers increase with distance from baselines, which form the axes of this illustration.*

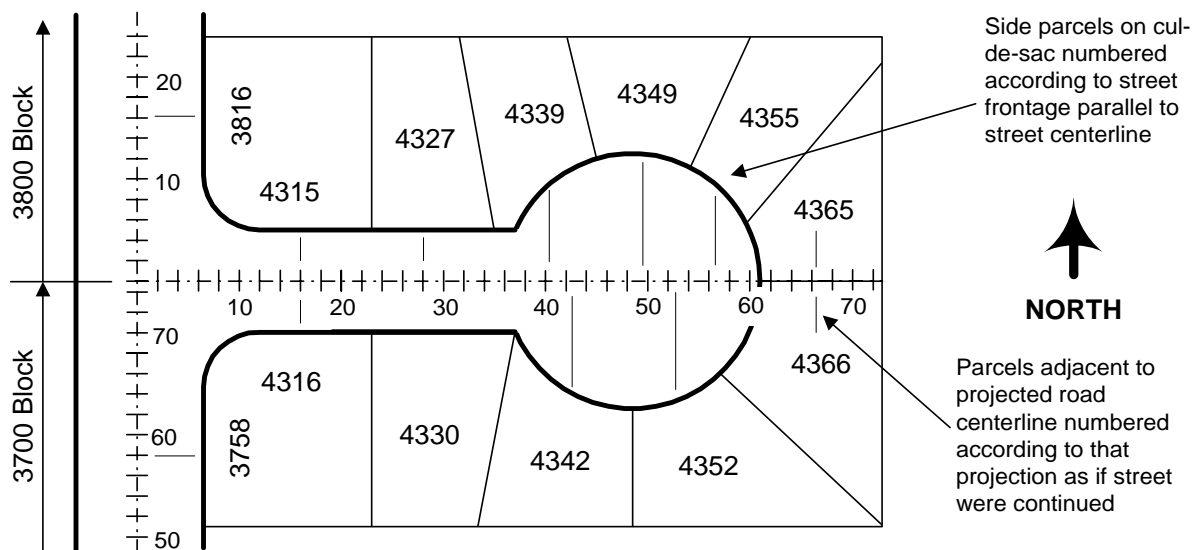




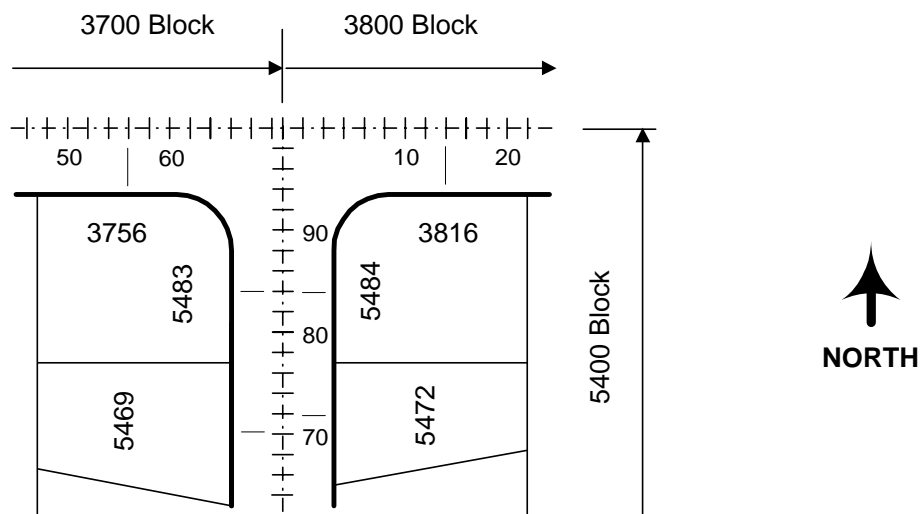
**Figure 3.** *Basic street naming and block numbering principles.*



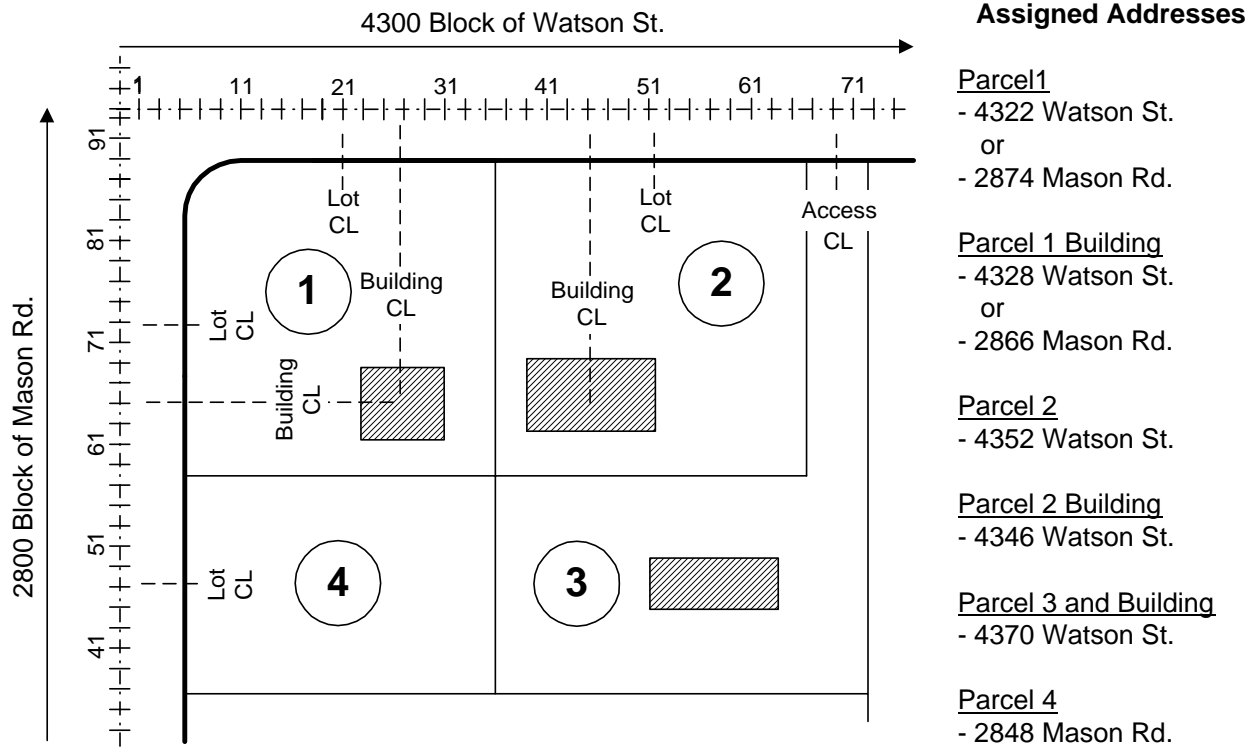
**Figure 4.** *Lot addressing details for streets with increasing numbers from point of beginning.*



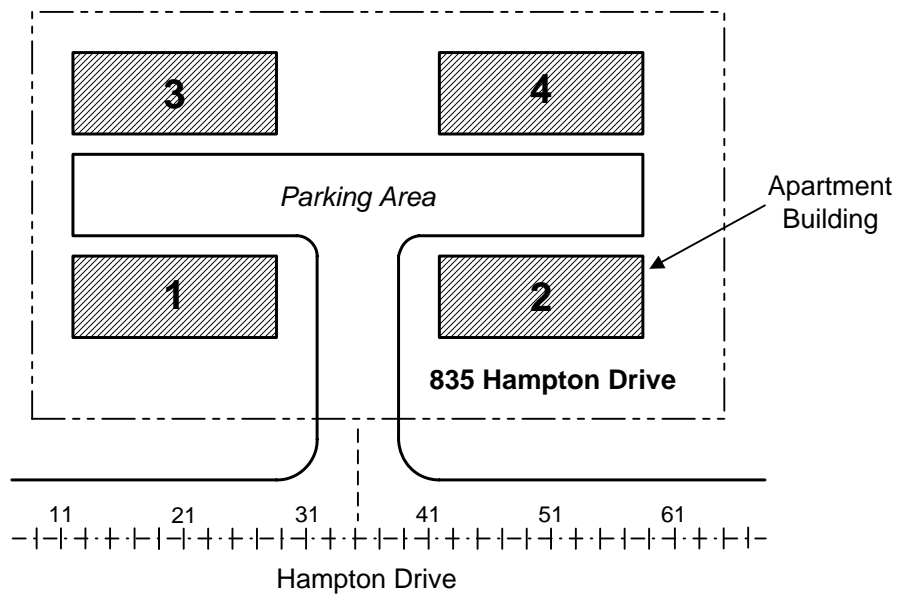
**Figure 5.** *Lot addressing details for streets with decreasing numbers from point of beginning.*



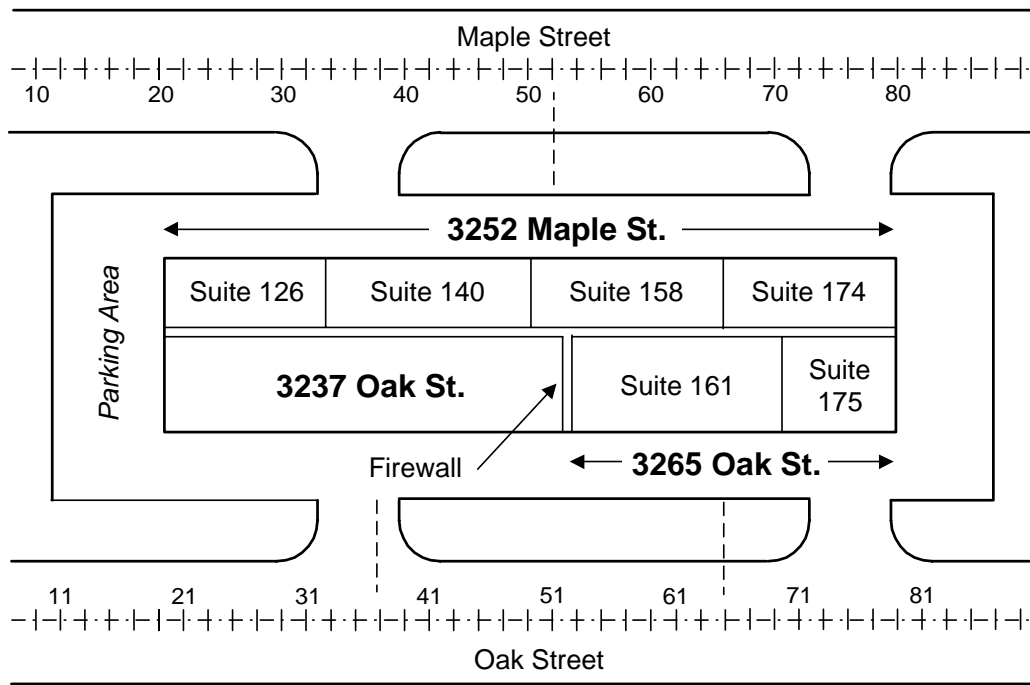
**Figure 6.** *Lot, parcel, and building address assignment principles.*



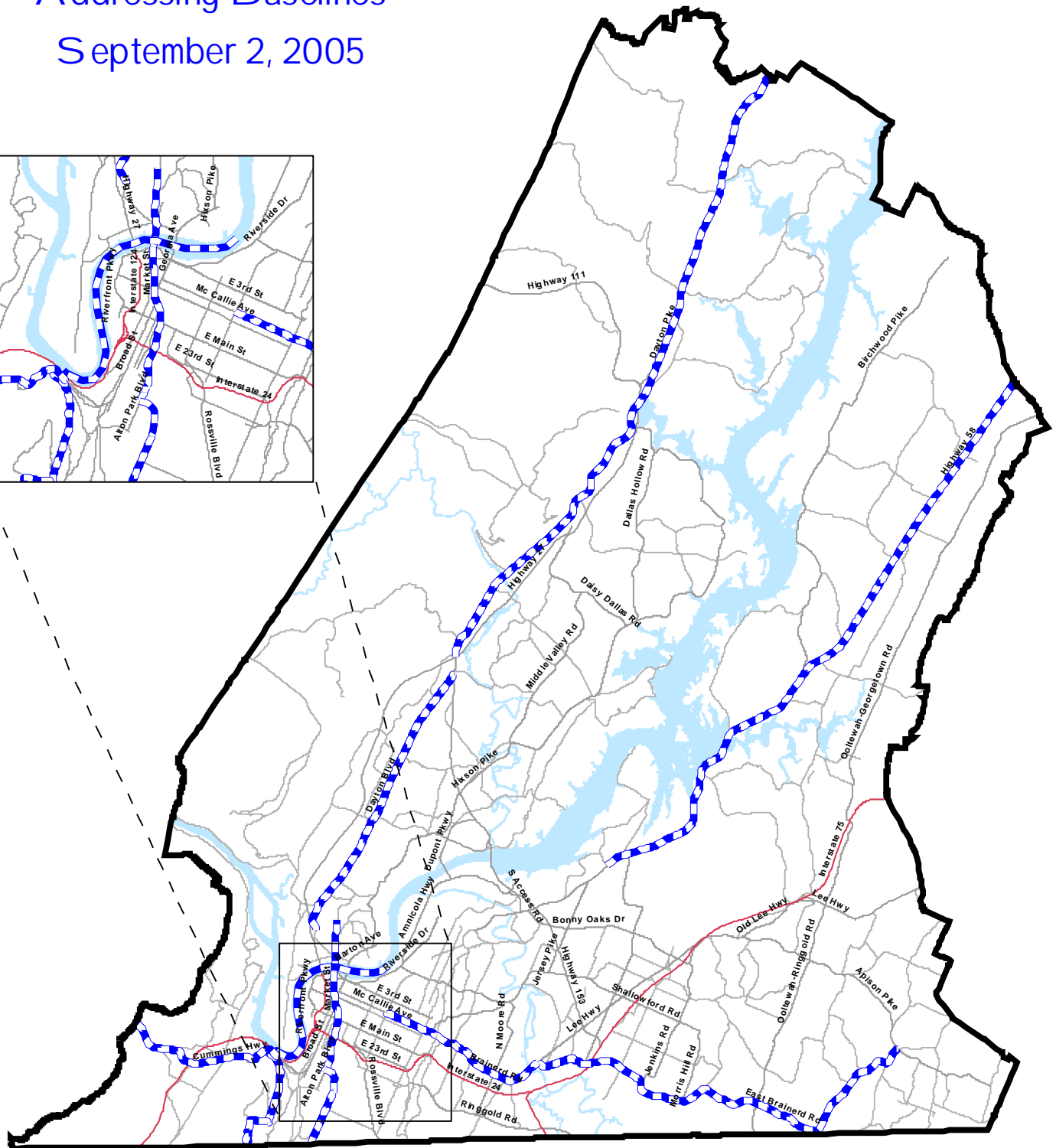
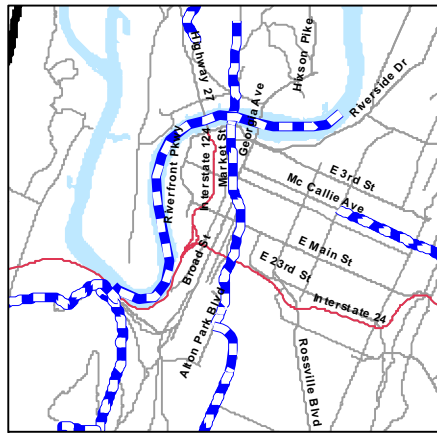
**Figure 7.** *Example apartment complex building designation schema.*



**Figure 8.** *Example commercial building designation schema.*



September 2, 2005



## Baselines